



UPDATE

March/April 2014

A bi-monthly newsletter for Veterans served by the St. Cloud VA Health Care System, and for those who serve Veterans. Send news items and comments to St. Cloud VA Health Care System, Attn: Public Affairs Officer, 4801 Veterans Drive, St. Cloud, MN 56303, or via email to Barry.Venable@va.gov



Eat Healthy, Stay Healthy!

March is National Nutrition Month

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VA
HEALTH
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Defining
EXCELLENCE
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Calendar of Events

Saturday, March 1—Visit the St. Cloud VA Medical Center booth at **Central Minnesota Wellness Expo**, 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at Rivers Edge Convention Center in St. Cloud. Free and open to the public.

Saturday, March 1—**Women's Wellness Expo** hosted by the Health and Wellness Committee of the Montevideo Area Chamber of Commerce, 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Montevideo National Guard Training and Community Center (TACC), 711 South 17th Street, in Montevideo.

Monday, March 3 and April 7—Listen to the **Veterans Affairs Radio Show** on KNSI, AM 1450/FM 103.3, at 8:20 a.m.

Tuesday, March 4 & 18, April 1 & 15 - **St. Cloud Area Veterans Law Clinic**, 12 to 2 p.m. Free legal consultation for Veterans for: Social Security Law, Housing, Consumer, Child Support, Family Law, and Employment. No criminal law issues will be discussed. Please call 320-253-0138 or 1-800-622-7773 to schedule an appointment. Appointments are held at the St. Cloud VA in Building 28, Room 126.

Wednesday, March 5—**Mille Lacs County Community & Veterans Service Providers Fair**, 10 to 11:30 a.m. at Milaca Community and Veterans Services Building, 525 2nd St SE, in Milaca.

Thursday, March 6—**Project Homeless Connect**, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Rivers Edge Convention Center in St. Cloud. Explore VA Health Care services and apply for care. PHC is a one-day event for individuals and families who are homeless or near homeless to obtain access to local providers.

Calendar of Events

March 7-9—Enroll for VA health care and visit with St. Cloud VA Medical Center staff at the **St. Cloud Home Show** at Rivers Edge Convention Center, Friday, March 7 from Noon to 9 p.m.; Saturday, March 8 from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.; and Sunday, March 9 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Sunday, March 9—Explore VA benefits at **International Women's Day**, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at St. Cloud State University Fieldhouse.

Tuesday, March 11—**VA Benefit Workshop**, 7 to 8 p.m. at Apollo High School Auditorium, Rm. 614. Sponsored by Great River Financial & Investment Services & Great River Credit Union. St. Cloud VA and a panel of specialists will present on Veteran benefits and enrollment into the VA Health Care System. For Veterans enrolled or not.

Friday, March 14 & April 11—**Montevideo CBOC Caregiver Support Group**, 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. Contact Jess Behrends at 320-252-1670, ext. 7283 for more information.

Saturday, March 15—**Community Connections 2014**, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at North Branch High School, 38175 Grand Ave, in North Branch. St. Cloud VA Medical Center will host an Information and Enrollment booth.

Wednesday, March 19 and April 16—Listen to the **Voices for Veterans Radio Show** on WJON AM 1240, at 8:10 a.m.

Friday, March 21 and April 18—**Southwestern Minnesota Veterans' Law Clinic**, Noon to 2 p.m. at the Montevideo CBOC. FREE legal consultation for Veterans. No criminal law issues will be discussed. Please call 320-430-1051 to schedule an appointment.

Calendar of Events

Tuesday, March 25—**Drop-In Legal Clinic for Veterans**, 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the St. Cloud VA Medical Center Auditorium (Building 8). Free clinic for Veterans who have questions about child support and family, employment, benefits, expungement and debt collection.

Wednesday, March 26 and April 30—**Spa & Lunch**, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Model College in St. Cloud. Interested women and men should contact DAVA Commander Carmen Mickelson at 320-267-4380 for reservation. Event is free but must sign up in advance.

Wednesday, March 26—**St. Cloud State University Summer Job Fair**, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at SCSU Atwood Memorial Center.

March 28-29—Enroll for VA health care and visit with Brainerd VA Community Outbased Clinic (CBOC) at **Brainerd Lakes Marketplace**, 502 Jackson St., Brainerd, on Friday, March 28, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and Saturday, March 29, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Tuesday, April 1—**Veteran Community Resource Fair**, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Atwood Memorial Center, St. Cloud State University. Visit the St. Cloud VA booth to learn how to apply for health care benefits. Sponsored by SCSU.

Wednesday, April 2—**Groundbreaking Ceremony for new Kitchen at the St. Cloud VA Medical Center**, 9 a.m. on the south side of Bldg. 8.

April 4-6—Enroll for VA health care and visit with St. Cloud VA Medical Center staff at the **Central MN Car Show** at Rivers Edge Convention Center, St. Cloud, on Friday, April 4, from 3 to 8 p.m.; Saturday, April 5, from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.; and Sunday, April 6, from Noon to 3 p.m.

Calendar of Events

Wednesday, April 16—**Quarterly Memorial Service** for Veterans who have recently passed away. Ceremony begins at 1 p.m. at the St. Cloud VA Medical Center Chapel.

April 22-24—**The Clothesline Project**, in honor of Sexual Assault Awareness Month. The clothesline project is a visual display that raises awareness of military sexual trauma, sexual assault, and sexual abuse. Male and female Veterans design and exhibit shirts that reflect their experience of sexual trauma. St. Cloud VA Auditorium (Bldg. 8), 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. each day.

USELESS FACTS

- India is by far the largest world producer of bananas, growing 16.5 million tons.
- There are 100 to 150 milligrams of caffeine in an eight-ounce cup of brewed coffee, 10 milligrams in a six-ounce cup of cocoa, 5 to 10 milligrams in one ounce of bittersweet chocolate, and 5 milligrams in one ounce of milk chocolate.
- The American lobster can move through the water at a rate of up to 25 feet a second.
- The Earth orbits the Sun approximately eight times faster than a bullet travels.

QUOTATIONS

"Who says nothing is impossible. I've been doing nothing for years"

~Author Unknown

"There's a fine line between fishing and standing on the shore like an idiot."

- Steven Wright

Experience Health for Life

Does your health matter to you? At the St. Cloud VA, our goal is to assist you in establishing your own personal health plan which enables health and well-being so that you can pursue everything else that matters to you!

Health for Life Tips on Facebook is designed to provide you convenient health coaching and support messages and reminders on a wide variety of topics in support of your health goals.

It's free... "like" us on Facebook to help you stay healthy!

www.facebook.com/StCloudVAHCS

Stay healthy!

Like us to learn how!





Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans, in partnership with Central Minnesota Legal Services, invites you to participate in a free:

DROP-IN LEGAL CLINIC FOR VETERANS:

**CHILD SUPPORT & FAMILY, EMPLOYMENT, BENEFITS,
EXPUNGEMENT & DEBT COLLECTION**

Tuesday, March 25, 2014 | 10:30am – 3:30pm | St. Cloud VA HCS
Auditorium - Building 8 | 4801 Veterans Drive | St. Cloud, MN
Map available at <http://www2.va.gov/directory/guide/viewmap.cfm?mapID=3&id=127>

Attorneys, MACV staff, County Veteran Service Officers, child support officers, and VA Mental Health Homeless Program intake available throughout the day to assist veterans with questions, legal forms, and counsel.

For more information contact: Sara Sommarstrom – MACV | 651.224.0292 | ssommarstrom@mac-v.org

Disclaimer: VA assumes no responsibility for the attorneys providing services at this clinic.
This referral does not constitute a recommendation or endorsement by VA.

March 2014

Eat Wisely - A Focus On Nutrition



March is National Nutrition Month!

To help you build your awareness of good nutrition, the Nutrition staff have put together a daily tip for every day in March, including some yummy and nutritious recipes! Enjoy, and stay healthy!

March 1—Decrease the meat and increase the vegetables called for in stews and casseroles. Not only will you save money, but you'll get more nutrients too! *Are you trying to make recipes healthier but one's got you stumped? Bring it by the St. Cloud VA Nutrition Clinic and put the dietitians on the job!! We'll make a copy of your recipe (and give your recipe card back), put our heads together and come up with some ideas for you. We'll send the new-and-improved recipe ideas back to you in the mail.*

March 2—Recipe for today: Chicken and vegetable sauté

Get ready for a quick and easy healthy meal! You can play around with different vegetables and spices and you'll probably end up using this healthy option on a regular basis. Serve over spaghetti squash or whole grain noodles. This spring, when you're looking for a fresh change of pace, take out the tomato sauce. Complete the recipe as stated and add Italian dressing at the very end. Enjoy!

Ingredients:

1 medium onion, sliced
2 tablespoons vegetable oil
1 medium green pepper, cut into strips
1 1/2 cups tomato sauce
1 pound skinless, boneless chicken cutlets, cut into strips
1 medium zucchini, sliced
1 teaspoon dried basil
1 teaspoon dried parsley
1/2 tsp dried thyme
Freshly ground pepper to taste

Directions:

In large skillet over medium heat, cook onion in hot oil 4 minutes until tender.

Add peppers and tomato sauce. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low; simmer 10 minutes.

Add chicken, zucchini, basil, parsley, and thyme. Cook 10-15 minutes more until chicken is cooked.

Season with pepper to taste.

Nutrition Info (with tomato sauce)

Servings Per Recipe: 4 (1/4 of product per serving)

Calories: 237

Sodium: 631 mg

Fat: 15 gm

Carbohydrate: approximately 15 gm

Protein: 25 gm

For diabetes, count as approximately 3 meat exchanges, 1 carb choice, and 2 vegetable exchanges.

10 tips

Nutrition
Education Series

choose MyPlate

10 tips to a great plate



Making food choices for a healthy lifestyle can be as simple as using these 10 Tips. Use the ideas in this list to *balance your calories*, to choose foods to *eat more often*, and to cut back on foods to *eat less often*.

1 balance calories

Find out how many calories YOU need for a day as a first step in managing your weight. Go to www.ChooseMyPlate.gov to find your calorie level. Being physically active also helps you balance calories.

2 enjoy your food, but eat less

Take the time to fully enjoy your food as you eat it. Eating too fast or when your attention is elsewhere may lead to eating too many calories. Pay attention to hunger and fullness cues before, during, and after meals. Use them to recognize when to eat and when you've had enough.



3 avoid oversized portions

Use a smaller plate, bowl, and glass. Portion out foods before you eat. When eating out, choose a smaller size option, share a dish, or take home part of your meal.

4 foods to eat more often

Eat more vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and fat-free or 1% milk and dairy products. These foods have the nutrients you need for health—including potassium, calcium, vitamin D, and fiber. Make them the basis for meals and snacks.



5 make half your plate fruits and vegetables

Choose red, orange, and dark-green vegetables like tomatoes, sweet potatoes, and broccoli, along with other vegetables for your meals. Add fruit to meals as part of main or side dishes or as dessert.

6 switch to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk

They have the same amount of calcium and other essential nutrients as whole milk, but fewer calories and less saturated fat.



7 make half your grains whole grains

To eat more whole grains, substitute a whole-grain product for a refined product—such as eating whole-wheat bread instead of white bread or brown rice instead of white rice.

8 foods to eat less often

Cut back on foods high in solid fats, added sugars, and salt. They include cakes, cookies, ice cream, candies, sweetened drinks, pizza, and fatty meats like ribs, sausages, bacon, and hot dogs. Use these foods as occasional treats, not everyday foods.

9 compare sodium in foods

Use the Nutrition Facts label to choose lower sodium versions of foods like soup, bread, and frozen meals. Select canned foods labeled "low sodium," "reduced sodium," or "no salt added."



10 drink water instead of sugary drinks

Cut calories by drinking water or unsweetened beverages. Soda, energy drinks, and sports drinks are a major source of added sugar, and calories, in American diets.

Go to www.ChooseMyPlate.gov for more information.

March 3—Nutrition tip of the day: Choose whole-grain versions of pasta and bread; substitute whole-wheat flour for bleached white flour when you bake.

March 4—Nutrition tip of the day: Serve imaginative whole-grain side dishes like bulgur or kasha instead of white rice or pasta.

March 5—Nutrition tip of the day: Cook with less fat by using non-stick skillet.

March 6—Nutrition tip of the day: Blot all fried meats on paper towels. Or better yet, try baking instead of frying.

March 7—Recipe of the day: Mexican style stuffed potatoes (And a special thank you goes out to the Phoenix VA for the use of this recipe.)

Ingredients:

Four 10-ounce russet potatoes, rinsed, dried

1/2 cup milk

1 cup (packed) shredded Mexican-blend cheeses, grated low-fat (2% milk) cheddar cheese (about 4 ounces)

1/3 cup crushed nacho-flavored tortilla chips

1/3 cup chopped fresh cilantro

1/4 cup chopped green onions

2 Tbsp. Salsa (10 calories, 0 grams fat)

Optional:

1 Tbsp. Light sour cream (20 calories, 1 gram fat). Or better yet, add a bit of nonfat Greek yogurt, which provides more protein and calcium but tastes like sour cream.

Directions:

Position rack in top third of oven and preheat to 425°F. Pierce each potato several times with toothpick or fork. Bake on rack until tender, about 1 hour 10 minutes (or microwave on high until tender, turning once, 10 to 15 minutes). Transfer potatoes to work surface. Maintain oven temperature.

Cut off top 1/4 of long side of potato. Scoop potato flesh from skins into large bowl, leaving 1/4 inch-thick shell. Mash potato flesh with milk. Mix in cheese, chips, cilantro and onions. Season with salt and pepper. Fill shells with potato mixture, mounding in center. (Can be prepared 2 hours ahead. Cover with plastic and let stand at room temperature.)

Return stuffed potatoes to oven and bake until heated through, about 20 minutes. Top potatoes with sour cream and salsa and then serve.

Nutrition Info: Servings Per Recipe: 4, Calories: 394 calories, Fat: 13 grams, Saturated Fat: 7 grams, Protein: 13grams, Carbohydrates: 58 grams, Dietary Fiber: 5 grams

March 8—Nutrition tip of the day: No time for the Tex-Mex baked potato recipe mentioned yesterday? Try salsa on a baked potato or salad rather than high-fat dressing or butter. It won't have as much depth of flavor as yesterday's recipe, but is healthy and done in a flash.

March 9—Easy Chicken and Rice Casserole

What a long, cold winter! Warm up with this nice Minnesota casserole. It provides flavor and health, but doesn't require a whole lot of prep time. So you can spend your time on snow angels instead.

Ingredients:

1 can lowfat cream of mushroom soup
1 1/3 cup water
3/4 cup uncooked brown rice
1/4 tsp paprika
1/4- 1/2 tsp pepper
2 skinless, boneless chicken breast (~12 oz) (cut in half)
2 carrots, peeled and diced (or about 2 cups baby carrots cut in chunks)

Directions:

Preheat oven to 375°F.
In baking dish mix soup, water, carrots, rice, paprika and pepper.
Place the raw chicken on rice mixture.
Sprinkle with additional paprika and pepper. Cover dish.
When oven is ready, bake at 375°F for 45 minutes or until chicken and rice are done.

Nutrition Info:

Servings Per Recipe: 4
Calories: 335 calories
Total Fat: 9 g
Cholesterol: 73 mg
Sodium: 576 mg
Total Carbohydrates: 32 g
Dietary Fiber: 1.5 g
Protein: 30 g

March 10—Nutrition tip of the day: Use garlic or onion powder instead of garlic or onion salt, and use unsalted or low-salt vegetable broths and products.

March 11—Nutrition tip of the day: Buy reduced-fat cheese or use mozzarella, which is naturally lower in fat.

March 12—Nutrition tip of the day: Unhealthy fats like certain oils, butter, or margarines can usually be cut by 1/3 to 1/2 in recipes. At first try a small cut-back and then use less and less over time; you'll hardly notice the difference.

March 13—Nutrition tip of the day: You can also use fat substitutes like prune purees and applesauce in baked goods.

March 14—Nutrition tip of the day: Use fresh-frozen fruit without added sugar if fresh is unavailable.

March 15—Nutrition tip of the day: Cut the sugar called for in most recipes by 1/3 to 1/2.

March 16—Nutrition tip of the day: Sweeten waffles and quick breads with cinnamon, cardamom, vanilla, or almond extracts in order to cut the sugar content.

March 17—Plant nutrients and the benefits they provide can sometimes be grouped by color. Let's start with a discussion on red plants: Tomatoes, red peppers, cranberries, cherries and other naturally red foods will help maintain a healthy heart, memory function, and urinary tract health.

March 18—Blue/purple foods such as blueberries, plums, blackberries, purple grapes, purple cabbage and others help maintain healthy aging, memory, and urinary track health.

March 19—Yellow/orange foods like carrots, sweet potatoes, yellow peppers, oranges, and pumpkin also help maintain a healthy heart, immune system, and night-vision health.

March 20—Green fruits and vegetables like spinach, broccoli, kiwi, green grapes, and green peppers help prevent macular degeneration and cataracts.

March 21—White foods like bananas, garlic, apples, onions, and cauliflower help maintain heart health and lower the risk of some cancers.

March 22—And National Nutrition Month wouldn't be complete unless food safety wasn't discussed. Why? Because the last thing you want is to enjoy a yummy meal, only to get sick off of it later. Remember the following four words, they summarize food safety:

Clean
Separate
Cook
Chill

March 23—Clean: Wash Hands and Surfaces Often. Bacteria can be spread throughout the kitchen and get onto hands, cutting boards, utensils, counter tops, and food. So it is important to follow these guidelines:

—Wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds before and after handling food and after using the bathroom or changing diapers.

—Wash your hands after playing with pets or visiting petting zoos.
Wash your cutting boards, dishes, utensils, and counter tops with hot soapy water after preparing each food item and before you go on to the next food.

—Consider using paper towels to clean up kitchen surfaces. If you use cloth towels wash them often in the hot cycle of your washing machine.

March 24—And the following tips will also help keep surfaces clean in the kitchen:

—Rinse fresh fruits and vegetables under running tap water, including those with skins and rinds that are not eaten.

—Rub firm-skinned fruits and vegetables under running tap water or scrub with a clean vegetable brush while rinsing with running tap water.

—Keep books, backpacks, or shopping bags off the kitchen table or counters where food is prepared or served.

March 25—Separate: Don't Cross Contaminate. Cross-contamination is how bacteria can be spread. When handling raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs, keep these foods and their juices away from ready-to-eat foods. Always start with a clean scene — wash hands with warm water and soap. Wash cutting boards, dishes, countertops, and utensils with hot soapy water. And then keep the foods you'll be cooking away from the foods you'll be eating (or serving) uncooked.

March 26—More on cross-contamination:

—Separate raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs from other foods in your grocery shopping cart, grocery bags, and in your refrigerator.

—Use one cutting board for fresh produce and a separate one for raw meat, poultry, and seafood.

—Never place cooked food on a plate that previously held raw meat, poultry, seafood, or eggs

March 27—Food is safely cooked when it reaches a high enough internal temperature to kill the harmful bacteria that cause foodborne illness. Use a food thermometer to measure the internal temperature of cooked foods. How? Use a food thermometer, which measures the internal temperature of cooked meat, poultry, and egg dishes, to make sure that the food is cooked to a safe internal temperature.

March 28—So how hot should our food be?

—Cook beef roasts and steaks to a safe minimum internal temperature of 145°F. Cook pork to a minimum of 145°F. All poultry should reach a safe minimum internal temperature of 165°F throughout the bird, as measured with a food thermometer.

—Cook all ground meat to 160°F. Information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) links eating undercooked ground beef with a higher risk of illness. Remember, color is not a reliable indicator of doneness. Use a food thermometer to check the internal temperature of your burgers.

—Cook eggs until the yolk and white are firm, not runny. Don't use recipes in which eggs remain raw or only partially cooked. Casseroles (Hot Dish in Minnesota) and other dishes containing eggs should be cooked to 160°F.

—Cook fish to 145°F or until the flesh is opaque and separates easily with a fork.

March 29—And other ideas related to fully cooking food:

—Make sure there are no cold spots in food (where bacteria can survive) when cooking in a microwave oven. For best results, cover food, stir and rotate for even cooking. If there is no turntable, rotate the dish by hand once or twice during cooking. And if you start cooking with frozen food, the inside might not be cooked by the time the outside is ready to burn. So keep that in mind and consider thawing it first.

—Bring sauces, soups and gravy to a boil when reheating. Heat other leftovers thoroughly to 165°F.

—Use microwave-safe cookware and plastic wrap when cooking foods in a microwave oven.

Food Safety Guide

1

Be Clean,
Be Healthy

- Wash hands when necessary
- Do not work with food if you are ill
- Never touch ready-to-eat food with bare hands



2

Keep it Cold,
Keep it Hot

- Keep cold foods at 41°F or below
- Keep hot foods at 140°F or above



3

Don't Cross
Contaminate

- Do not store raw foods over cooked or ready-to-eat foods
- Never prepare ready-to-eat foods on the same surface or with the same utensils used to prepare raw animal proteins



4

Wash, Rinse,
& Sanitize

- Properly wash, rinse and sanitize all food contact utensils and equipment



5

Cook it
& Chill it

- Cook food until it reaches a proper internal temperature
- Rapidly cool food to 41°F or below



March 30—Chill: Refrigerate Promptly! Refrigerate foods quickly because cold temperatures slow the growth of harmful bacteria. Do not over-stuff the refrigerator. Cold air must circulate to help keep food safe. Keeping a constant refrigerator temperature of 40°F or below is one of the most effective ways to reduce the risk of foodborne illness. Use an appliance thermometer to be sure the temperature is consistently 40°F or below. The freezer temperature should be 0°F or below.

—Refrigerate or freeze meat, poultry, eggs, and other perishables as soon as you get them home from the store.

—Never let raw meat, poultry, eggs, cooked food, or cut fresh fruits or vegetables sit at room temperature more than two hours before putting them in the refrigerator or freezer (one hour when the temperature is above 90°F).

—Never defrost food at room temperature. Food must be kept at a safe temperature during thawing. There are three safe ways to defrost food: in the refrigerator, in cold water, and in the microwave using the defrost setting. Food thawed in cold water or in the microwave should be cooked immediately.

—Always marinate food in the refrigerator.

—Divide large amounts of leftovers into shallow containers for quicker cooling in the refrigerator.

March 31—Food safety is a concern when we're away from home too. So here are some ideas for how to stay well when out:

—Keep cold lunches cold: To keep lunches cold away from home, include a small frozen gel pack or frozen juice box. Of course, if there's a refrigerator available, store perishable items there upon arrival. Insulated, soft-sided lunch boxes or bags are best for keeping food cold, but metal or plastic lunch boxes and paper bags can also be used. If using paper lunch bags, create layers by double bagging to help insulate the food.

—Some food is safe without a cold source. Items that don't require refrigeration include whole fruits and vegetables, hard cheese, unopened canned meat and fish, chips, breads, crackers, peanut butter, jelly, mustard, and pickles.

—Keeping hot lunches hot:

Use an insulated container to keep food like soup, chili, and stew hot. Fill the container with boiling water, let stand for a few minutes, empty, and then put in the piping hot food. Keep the insulated container closed until lunchtime to keep the food hot: 140°F or above.



MOVE!® Success Stories

WEIGHT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM
FOR VETERANS

Not Looking Back:

**MOVE!® HELPS DIABETIC VETERAN RONALD WILLIAMS
MAKE DRAMATIC CHANGES AND LOSE 101 POUNDS**

Retired Navy Master Chief Ronald Williams recently shared this MOVE!® success story with Krista Kazembe, MOVE!® Coordinator at the Iowa City VA HCS:

"I joined the MOVE!® Telephone program at 328 pounds because I was facing insulin if I didn't get my A1c—7.7 at the time—under control. I have diabetes, and my doctor wanted me to go on insulin. I decided to change my lifestyle instead because I knew I was looking at losing toes and feet. My doctor said I had 3 months.



I've always been a man of strong will. I was in Vietnam. If there's something wrong, I take action. So I started changing my lifestyle drastically right away. When I met with my doctor I weighed 343 pounds. By the time I started MOVE!® 6 weeks later, I was at 328. I was able to lose 15 pounds even before I started the program!

I was in the MOVE!® Telephone program for 1 year, receiving scheduled monthly calls from Krista, my MOVE!® telephone provider. I also met with the MOVE!® Dietitian Connie Olson and MOVE!® Physical Therapist Lindsey Carey to help change my perspective on how much I should eat and exercise.

I've lost 101 pounds total, and my waist size went from a 54 to 40. I now weigh around 240 and monitor my weight closely. I take action if I get near 250 pounds. It only took 30 pounds of weight loss to get off my heart medications. My A1c went down to 4.5, so my doctor took me off my diabetes medication, too.

Not only did I change how and when I eat, I also greatly increased my activity level, starting slowly by exercising just a few minutes a day. Eventually, I built up to walking a 5 percent grade on a treadmill at 2.8 mph for 75 minutes—that's 3 miles! I also do 45 sit-

ups on my Bowflex machine. I did this routine 5 to 6 days a week while I was losing the 101 pounds. To maintain this weight loss, I continue to eat healthy and stay active through VA volunteer work and working out.

If I could tell other Veterans how to get started, I'd say:

- *Ask yourself what you want.*
- *Ask yourself what kind of life you want.*
- *Motivate yourself. Don't count on anyone else.*
- *Go to a MOVE!® class, especially if you're diabetic.*
- *Learn how to read a food label.*
- *Learn what's good and not good for you.*
- *Serve yourself so you are in control of your portions.*
- *Measure what you eat, don't just eat out of the carton.*
- *Write down what you eat every day, and use food logs.*
- *Treat yourself in healthy ways.*
- *Eat less and make the most of what you eat.*
- *Weigh yourself every morning.*
- *Slow down while eating and relax.*
- *Don't go back for seconds, and don't eat after 6 pm.*
- *Eat breakfast!*

When I'm asked what I can share with fellow Veterans about physical activity, I say passionately, 'if you are not exercising, either you don't have time to do it or you don't want to do it.' When you're increasing your activity, ask yourself if you *have* to quit or if you *want* to quit. If it's 'I want to quit', just suck it up and keep going. Despite being 67 years old and having diabetes, two artificial knees, and arthritis, I challenged my body slowly over time. My endurance and strength improved and my weight decreased. A year later and 101 pounds lighter, I've changed my quality of life drastically. And I'm not planning on looking back!"





Don't Be A Victim

Scam Artists are on the loose, and Veterans and families are favorite targets.

Recently a patient advocate received a phone call from a relative of a recently deceased Veteran, who wanted to inform the facility of a potential scam.

The relative reported that approximately one week after the death of her Veteran grandfather, the widow of the deceased Veteran received a call, allegedly from the St. Cloud VA, regarding her deceased husband's hospitalization here during the 1980s.

The caller informed her that while hospitalized the Veteran had taken out a life insurance policy and that the policy was now delinquent.

To keep the policy active the widow was instructed to send a money order in the amount of \$1549 within three days.

The caller confirmed the address, SSN, birth date, and dates of admission of the deceased Veteran.

The widow asked to speak to a supervisor, and the caller stated they would put the "Director of the VA" on the phone, at which point a recording came on the line, allegedly made by the Director.

The widow then went to a local store and was in the process of purchasing a money order when a cashier became suspicious and convinced her of the potential for a scam. Thank goodness for good people!



DON'T BE A VICTIM: BE AWARE OF PENSION POACHING SCAMS

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) pension exists to help financially disadvantaged wartime Veterans and their survivors.

Be cautious if someone offers to move your assets around for you to qualify for VA pension. This type of scam is often directed toward Veterans and family members who do not actually qualify for VA pension. You could be required to repay these benefits to the government.

Examples of possible pension poaching scams:

- Organizations that cold call Veterans, charge money for assisting with a VA pension claim, and take credit card information from Veterans over the telephone
- People who charge as much as \$6,000 upfront to represent claimants before VA, with a percentage of any eventual back payment from VA as a portion of the ultimate fee



For more information about VA pension eligibility requirements—which include special monthly pension benefits—go to www.benefits.va.gov/pension or call 1-800-827-1000.



THE CLOTHESLINE



P R O J E C T

To commemorate Sexual Assault Awareness Month in April, the St. Cloud VA HCS is hosting a Clothesline Project. The Clothesline Project is a visual display that **raises awareness of military sexual trauma, sexual assault, and sexual abuse.** Male and female Veterans decorate shirts that reflect their experience of sexual trauma and recovery to “Break the Silence” that can often surround these experiences. Designing a shirt allows Veterans to speak up about experiences they may have previously kept silent. Completed shirts are hung side-by-side to bear witness to the impact sexual violence has had on their lives.

T-shirts were donated by Veterans organizations and are available for Veteran participants free of charge. Veterans can decorate a shirt or pick one up to decorate at home on March 25 and 27, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., and March 31, April 2 and 4, from 1 – 3 p.m., in Building 28, Room 59. Veterans decorating shirts elsewhere are asked to deliver the shirt to the VA by April 15. Drop-off locations include the CBOCs in Montevideo, Alexandria and Brainerd, Operator desk in Building 1 or the Mental Health Clerk desk in Building 111. **Shirts will also be available for decoration in the VA Auditorium in St. Cloud, April 22-24, between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., during the display period.**

Those decorating t-shirts will remain anonymous. However, your voice will be heard.

The Clothesline Project (CLP) is a program started on Cape Cod, MA, in 1990 to address the issue of violence against women. It is a vehicle for those affected by violence to express their emotions by decorating a shirt. They then hang the shirt on a clothesline to be viewed by others as testimony to the problem of violence against women. With the support of many, it has since spread world-wide. The St. Cloud VA is adapting the concept to address military sexual trauma, sexual assault, and sexual abuse—issues which affect women as well as men, because any type of trauma can have lasting effects on a person’s physical and mental health. We also know that people can recover from trauma, and we want to help.

For more information regarding Military Sexual Assault please contact Joy Finkelson, Military Sexual Trauma Coordinator, at 320-252-1670, ext. 6398.



St. Cloud VA Auditorium (Bldg. 8)
April 22—24, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Veteran Tax Assistance

Start your engines, folks: The 2014 tax filing season's green flag waves for taxpayers on Jan. 31. Gather your W-2s, 1099s, K-1s, 1098s and any cancelled checks or receipts you might need, take a deep breath, and dive into tax filing fun!

OK, maybe it's not always fun, but it can be made easier if you're able to get assistance when you need it. Being a Veteran or an active-duty Servicemember means you have options for assistance, too.

First, check out the Internal Revenue Service's [Volunteer Income Tax Assistance and Tax Counseling for the Elderly](#) programs. The page has information on how to qualify for these programs, and links to online search pages so that you can find help near you.



Qualified Veterans and active-duty military can also get free federal and state tax preparation and filing assistance, both online and in person, by [MyFreeTaxes.com](#). This is the only free online tax preparation and filing service available in all 50 states and Washington, D.C., that allows users to file both a federal and state return, no matter where they live. To use this service, qualifying families must earn \$58,000 or less.

[MyFreeTaxes.com](#) is sponsored by Walmart, Goodwill, the National Disability Institute and the United Way. The site's architect – Everard Lee Davenport – sits on the board of the [IRS's Electronic Tax Administration Advisory Committee](#), and works with nonprofit organizations, corporations, government agencies and [Volunteer Income Tax Assistance](#) sites to create and deliver free income tax, financial empowerment and digital learning programs to underserved communities.

For those of you who prefer to do your own taxes, there are several options to e-file your taxes online – free of charge.

[IRS Free File](#) is available to taxpayers with an Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) of \$58,000 or less in 2014.

[TurboTax Freedom Edition](#) is only available to those eligible for IRS Free File.

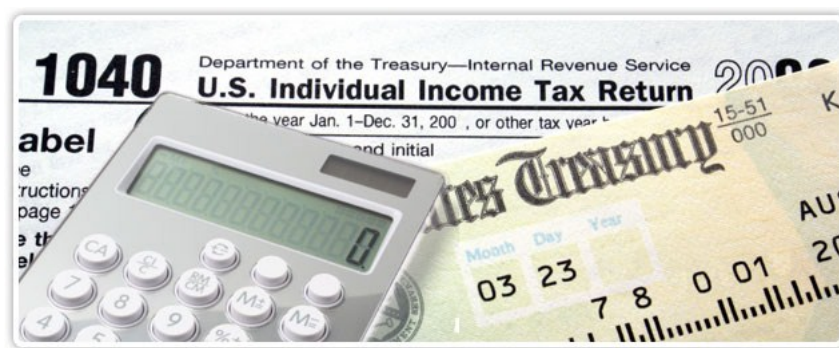
[TurboTax Military Edition](#): TurboTax created a software program specifically for military members. There is currently a free version for junior enlisted, and a discount for senior enlisted and officers. [Read our full review](#) for more information, or visit the [TurboTax Military Edition site](#).

[MilitaryOneSource.mil](#) offers a free version of H&R Block At Home®. You must click the link directly from the MilitaryOneSource home page and be logged into your account. This version features one federal return and up to three state returns (good for military members who change state residency during a tax year).

[Taxslayer.com](#) offers free state and federal e-filing for military personnel.

Whatever your method, we hope that one of these resources helps you and your family to quickly and efficiently put the 2014 tax season in your rear-view mirror.

Please note that VA does not endorse any of these sites but brings your attention to them as they have services available specifically for Veterans and military families.



Disabled Veterans Can Ride for Free

Since mid-2009, disabled Veterans have been able to ride the transit systems throughout the state for free; some Veterans are still unaware of this benefit. It is one more way the State of Minnesota has chosen to honor Veterans. And with each adult Transit ticket costing between \$2.25 and \$3.00, this benefit helps Veterans keep a couple extra dollars in their pockets, and helps tremendously for Veterans needing special disability vehicles to travel.

Disabled Veterans are able to ride the Metro Transit Busses for free with a valid Veteran's Identification Card. By presenting this card to bus operators, disabled Veterans can use any fixed-route service in the state. This includes Metro Transit and suburban transit providers in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area as well as regular -route services in Duluth, St. Cloud, Rochester, Moorhead, East Grand Forks and Mankato.

The free ride benefit also extends to a personal care attendant assisting a disabled Veteran as they travel.

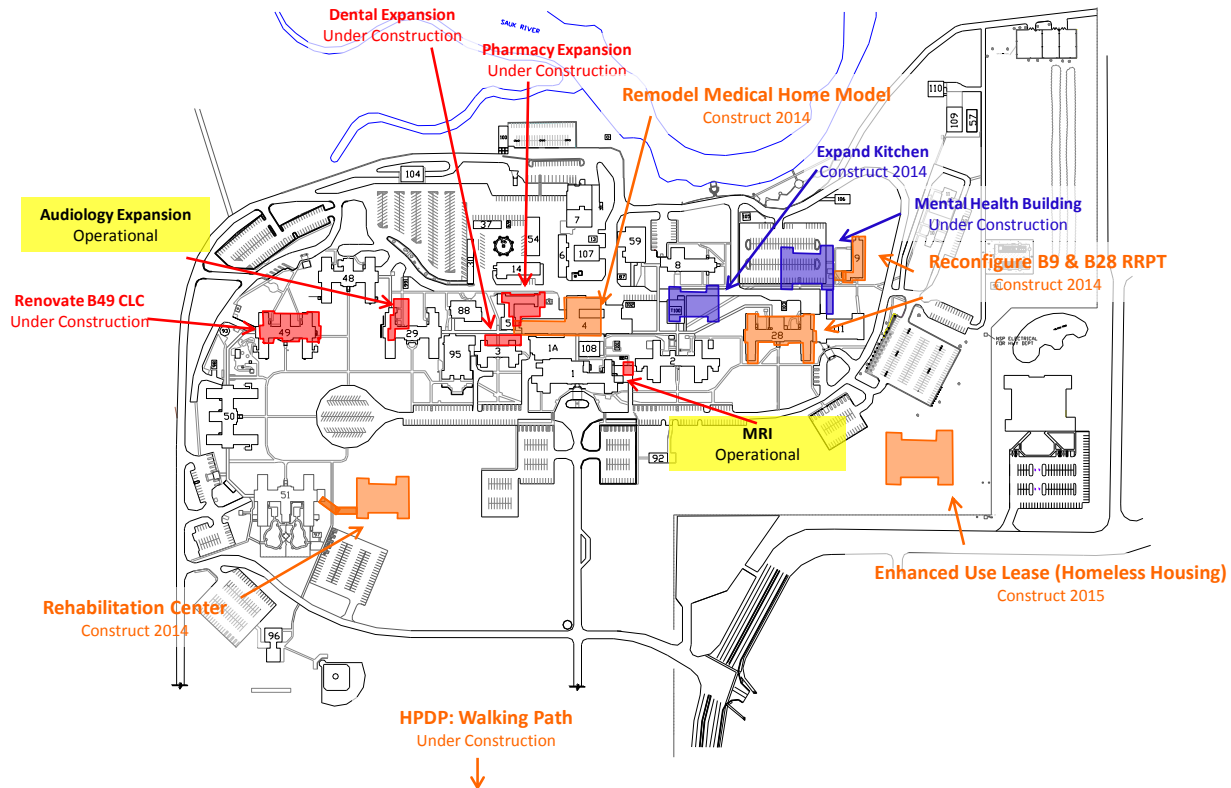
Previously, the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) transportation service was responsible for transporting all disabled Veterans to and from the VA Hospital. By allowing Veterans free Metro Transit rides, the stress for the DAV to transport all disabled Veterans has been greatly reduced. This service gives Veterans more convenient options to not only use the VA Hospital, but throughout the metro area as well.

To qualify for the free rides, disabled Veterans must show a Veterans Identification Card, or VIC issued by a VA Medical Center with the words "Service Connected" or the initials "SC" below the photo. The cards are available at the VA medical centers in Minneapolis and St. Cloud.

For more information on the on how to obtain a Veterans Identification Card read the article later in this issue or visit the [U.S Department of Veterans Affairs website](http://www.va.gov).



Construction Update



Despite the winter weather, construction projects continue. The new MRI wing in Bldg. 1 and expansion of the Audiology Clinic in Bldg. 29 were recently completed. Current projects in construction include the renovation of Bldg. 49, construction of the new Rehabilitation Center, construction of the new Mental Health Building, expansions of the Pharmacy and Dental Clinic, and the construction of a walking path on the front lawn. The next major project scheduled to get underway is what we call the “Kitchen” project. This project builds a new kitchen and dining room between Bldgs. 2 and 8 to replace the 1924-era “farm” kitchen in Bldg. 1. Existing kitchen space in the central core of campus can then be renovated into Primary Care space. The new kitchen building will consist of an 18,000 sq. ft., single story building with a basement and connecting corridor (expandable for future second level). Please join us for the Groundbreaking Ceremony on April 2, at 9 a.m., on the south side of Bldg. 8.

VA to Issue Secure Veteran Health Identification Cards (VHICs)

The VA will begin issuing a newly redesigned, more secure Veteran Health Identification Card (VHIC) to replace the Veteran Identification Card (VIC) on February 21st. The VHIC replaces the less secure VIC which was implemented in 2004. VA recommends Veterans safeguard their VIC as they would a credit card, and cut up or shred the card once it is replaced.

The new VHICs are distinguished by additional security features that better protect the Veteran's personal information and have a different look and feel. In addition to being more secure, the card offers enhanced features that transform it into a health identification card. Similar to a typical health insurance card, the VHIC displays the Veteran's Member ID (a new, unique identifier) and a Plan ID that reflects the Veteran's enrollment in VA health care.

The VA will first produce the VHIC for newly enrolled and enrolled Veterans who have not previously been issued a Veteran Identification Card (VIC) – this includes producing the VHICs that are on hold. Then, in April, VA will begin its effort to automatically issue the more secure VHIC to each VIC cardholder. By July 2014, each VIC cardholder will be automatically mailed a VHIC, ensuring enrolled Veterans have identification that is safe, authentic, secure and accurate.

Enrolled Veterans can get more information at www.va.gov/healthbenefits/vhic. Veterans who are not enrolled in the VA health care system can apply for enrollment at any time by visiting www.va.gov/healthbenefits/enroll, calling 1-877-222-VETS (8387) or by visiting their local VA health care facility.

For more information, visit www.va.gov/healthbenefits/vhic.



Your New ID Card: More Secure And Personal

The new Veteran Health Identification Card (VHIC) offers peace of mind with a personal touch.

Already have the old Veteran Identification Card? If so, VA will automatically mail you a replacement VHIC. Just make sure VA has your current address.

Cards will be mailed starting April 2014. It may take up to 3 months to replace all cards. Once you receive your new card, destroy your VIC as you would a credit card by cutting or shredding it.

If you are already enrolled but do not have a Veteran Identification Card, contact the Enrollment Coordinator at your local VA medical facility or request a new VHIC at your next VA health care appointment.



To learn more about the VHIC, visit www.va.gov/healthbenefits/VHIC or call 1-877-222-VETS (8387).

Document Number
02052014



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
Chief Business Office
Health Eligibility Center

New Veteran Health Identification Card

Description

Since 2004, VA has been issuing Veterans enrolled with VA for their health care a Veteran Identification Card (VIC). VA understands the importance of personal security and as part of VA's commitment to protect Veterans' private information, the current VIC will be replaced with a Veteran Health Identification Card (VHIC). The VHIC does not have the Veteran's Social Security number and date of birth contained in the magnetic stripe or barcode. Other security measures include using microtext to help prevent counterfeit reproductions.

What is Changing

The old VIC is being replaced with a more secure identification card, the Veteran Health Identification Card (VHIC).

Additional Information

VA will begin mailing the new card to newly enrolled Veterans beginning in February 2014.

Enrolled Veterans who do not have a VIC can contact their local VA medical center Enrollment Coordinator to apply for the new VHIC, or can request a VHIC at their next VA health care appointment.

VA will automatically send enrolled Veterans who have been issued a VIC the new VHIC beginning in April 2014. Until Veterans receive the new, more secure VHIC, they are encouraged to safeguard their old VIC as they would a credit card to prevent unauthorized access to their identity information. Once the new VHIC is received, Veterans should destroy their old VIC by cutting it up or shredding it.

Veterans who are NOT enrolled with the VA for their health care and who would like to receive the new VHIC can apply for enrollment online at www.va.gov/healthbenefits/enroll.

To further protect Veteran's identity and prevent identity theft, either one primary form of identification or two secondary forms of identification will be required to receive the new VHIC. For more information on these documents, visit www.va.gov/healthbenefits/vhic.



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
Chief Business Office
Health Eligibility Center

Meet the Veteran Health Identification Card

Newly Designed - More Secure



Frequently Asked Questions

Why is VA issuing new identification cards to Veterans?

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is implementing a newly redesigned, more secure Veteran Health Identification Card (VHIC) to replace the Veteran Identification Card (VIC), which was introduced in 2004.

In 2010, VA initiated a redesign to remove the Social Security number (SSN) from the barcode and magnetic stripe on the VIC to improve the protection of Veteran's private information and conform with the Social Security number reduction and security mandates throughout the Federal Government. VA is implementing the new VHIC, which incorporates the redesign.

The new cards are distinguished by additional security features that protect the Veteran's personal information and have a different look and feel. In addition to being more secure, the card has been transformed into a health identification card. Similar to a typical health insurance card, the VHIC displays the Veteran's Member ID, a new, unique identifier, as well as a Plan ID that reflects the Veteran's enrollment in VA health care.

In February 2014, the card will be offered to newly enrolled Veterans and enrolled Veterans who have not previously been issued a VIC and request an identification card. Then, in early April, VA will begin automatically issuing the more secure VHIC to each VIC cardholder. After the new VHIC is received, VA recommends Veterans dispose of their VIC as they would a credit card, and cut up or shred the card once it is replaced.

While a VHIC is not required to receive VA health care, VA wants all enrolled Veterans to have a card that protects their personal information.

When will the VHIC be implemented?

In February 2014, VA will begin the production of the VHIC. Initially, the card will be offered to newly enrolled Veterans and enrollees who have not received a VIC. Then, in early April, VA will begin a replacement card issuance effort. By July 2014, each VIC cardholder will be automatically mailed a VHIC, ensuring enrolled Veterans have identification that is safe, authentic, secure and accurate.

What are the advantages of the VHIC?

- Secure – Redesigned card contains new identifiers – a Member ID and Card Number eliminate the need for the Veteran's SSN to be on the card. Microtext prevents reproduction or counterfeiting of the card
- Personalized – Displays emblem of Veteran's branch of service and identifies if the Veteran was disabled from service-connected condition, is a former POW or recipient of a Purple Heart or Medal of Honor
- Accessible – Braille "VA" helps visually impaired Veterans recognize and use the card
- Interoperable – Can be used to look up Veteran's health records at VA and Department of Defense (DoD) health care facilities when arrangements are in place
- Compliant – Meets national standard for health identification cards
- Informative – Displays VA phone numbers and emergency care instructions

What is the Member ID?

The Member ID is a unique number assigned by the DoD and is also known as the Electronic Data Interchange Personal Identifier (EDIPI). The Veteran's Member ID will be displayed on the front of the card. Your Member ID can be used by VA health care facility staff to manually look up your health record. *VA is currently enhancing other information systems to be able to look up your record by your Member ID, so there will still be occasions when we may ask you for your SSN.*

What if the Member ID is not displayed on my VHIC?

If the Member ID does not appear on your card it means DoD has not yet assigned you an EDIPI. VA is working with DoD to complete the EDIPI assignments and will automatically trigger a new VHIC to be sent to you when it is available.

Will the VHIC also replace the wristband for inpatients that includes SSN?

No.

If not, why not, given privacy concerns voiced by some Veterans and the stated purpose of "removing Veterans' Social Security numbers (SSN) from the barcode and magnetic stripe on the VIC based on security mandates put into effect throughout the Federal Government"?

This EDIPI software just replaces the VIC card; the wristband software is purchased locally by each facility for their use.

I was in more than one branch of the military. Can I have all of my military service emblems displayed on my VHIC?

Due to space limitations, only the emblem of your last branch of service can be displayed on your card.

What information is in the VHIC barcode and magnetic stripe?

Each VHIC is assigned a unique number. The card number is stored in the barcode and magnetic stripe and is read by software applications to look up your record. Your Member ID is also in the barcode and magnetic stripe. The magnetic stripe also contains your name and another unique number assigned by VA, an Internal Control Number.

What is the Plan ID and how is it used?

The Plan ID on the VHIC is a unique number issued to VA by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and identifies VA's health plan offered to enrolled Veterans. Starting in 2016, this number will be used by doctors and hospitals to assist them when they send health care related claims for payment to VA.

How can I replace my VIC with the new VHIC?

You do not need to take any action. Starting in March 2014, VA will begin mailing a Veteran Health Identification Card to each VIC cardholder. VA expects to complete issuance of the replacement cards in early July 2014.

I have a VIC but did not receive my replacement VHIC?

Between April and July 2014, VA expects to mail all VIC cardholders a replacement VHIC. If you do not receive your replacement card, please call 1-877-222-VETS for assistance.

I am enrolled but I never received the old VIC. How do I get a VHIC?

Contact the Enrollment Coordinator at your local VA health care facility to arrange to have your picture taken for a VHIC, or you can request a new VHIC at your next VA health care appointment. To confirm your identity, bring a government-issued photo ID or other acceptable forms of identification. For a list of the types of documents accepted, see the *Acceptable Documents for Identity Proofing* table below.

Will I be responsible for paying for my VHIC?

No. There is no cost to you to obtain a VHIC.

I am a Veteran but I am not enrolled in VA health care. Can I get a VHIC?

You must be enrolled to receive a VHIC. We encourage you to apply for enrollment online at www.va.gov/healthbenefits/enroll, by phone at 1-877-222-VETS (8387), by mail or in person at your local VA health care facility. After your enrollment is confirmed, which is contingent on meeting certain eligibility requirements, (generally within 5 days of application), VA is able to process your request for a VHIC. Veterans find it is convenient to bring in their identification documents and get their picture taken for their VHIC at their first scheduled appointment.

I just had my picture taken for the VHIC. When can I expect to receive it?

Your VHIC will be mailed to you and is generally received within 10 days. If you do not receive the card within 10 days, call us at 1-877-222-VETS (8387) for assistance.

Am I required to have a VHIC if I am enrolled?

No. While VA encourages all enrolled Veterans to have a VHIC, you are not required to have the card to receive VA health care. The card helps to identify you as a patient and assists in checking you in for your VA appointments.

Can I use my VIC until I receive my new VHIC?

Yes. Please remember your SSN is in the barcode and magnetic stripe. It is important to safeguard your VIC just as you would a credit card to prevent unauthorized access to your identity information.

What do I do with my old VIC once I receive my replacement VHIC?

Once you receive your new VHIC, appropriately destroy your old VIC just as you would a credit card – by cutting the VIC into multiple pieces or by shredding the card.

I've lost my card (or my card was stolen). What do I need to do?

If your VHIC is lost or stolen, contact your local VA health care facility to request a new card.

What types of identification do I need to receive a new VHIC?

If you have a VIC, VA will automatically mail you a new VHIC. If you do not have a VIC, you will need to present one form of primary identification or two forms of secondary identification to request your VHIC.

I'm confused; who can I call with questions?

Contact your local Enrollment Coordinator by calling 1-877-222-VETS (8387).

The following documents are acceptable proof of identity. Documents presented as proof must be current (not expired) and original. Photocopies are not acceptable.

Primary Identification	Secondary Identification
<i>Present ONE form of Primary Identification</i>	<i>If a Primary form of identification is not available, present TWO forms of Secondary Identification</i>
State-Issued Driver's License	Certified Birth Certificate
State issued ID	Original Social Security Card
United States (U.S.) Passport	DD214 or equivalent certificate issued by Department of Defense or War Department
VA Identification Card (VIC) or VHIC	Marriage License (certified copy)
Military ID Card	State Voter Registration Card
Temporary Resident Card	Student ID Card
Resident Alien Card	Native American Tribal Document
Permanent Resident Card	Certificate of U.S. Citizenship (INS Form N-560 or N-561)
Other Federal or State issued photo ID	Certificate of Naturalization (INS Form N-550 or N-570)
	Certificate issued by US Consular Offices documenting the birth of a child on foreign soil to a US citizen. (Form FS-545, Form DS-1350, DS Form 240 or FS Form 240)

USELESS FACTS

- In Australia, the Number 1 topping for pizza is eggs.
- In Chile, the favorite topping is mussels and clams.
- In the United States, it's pepperoni.

Nine Things To Do Today to Stay Healthy

Be Involved In Your Health Care: Take an active role-Work with your health care team to improve your health

Be Tobacco Free: Quitting smoking is the single most important thing you can do to improve your health-Don't use tobacco in any form

Eat Wisely: Eat a variety of foods including fresh fruits and vegetables and whole grains-Limit salt, fat, sugar and alcohol

Be Physically Active: Avoid inactivity. Aim for at least 2 ½ hours of aerobic activity each week

Strive for a Healthy Weight: If you need to lose weight, losing even a little will help-If you are normal weight, congratulations, maintain it

Limit Alcohol: If you choose to drink, limit to no more than 1 drink a day for women, 2 drinks a day for men-Avoid "binge drinking"

Get Recommended Screening Tests and Immunizations: Recommendations for screening tests depend on your age, gender, health status and family history-Ask which screening tests and immunizations are recommended for you

Manage Stress: Learn how to recognize stress and pay attention to stress-Learn ways to help you manage and reduce stress

Be Safe: Find out how to prevent sexually transmitted infections, falls and motor vehicle crashes-Take action to protect yourself, and those you love, from harm.

A Recipe for Health

Chicken & Wild Rice

Ingredients

4-6 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, thawed
2 T. low-sodium soy sauce
1 t. olive oil, divided
1 T. molasses
¼ tsp. red pepper flakes or to taste
1 med. onion, chopped
2-3 stalks celery, chopped
8 oz. fresh mushrooms, chopped

1 T. minced garlic or to taste
1 c. wild rice, raw (or combination wild and brown rice)
2 cans low-sodium chicken broth
½ c. raisins or dried cranberries
1 (5- to 6-oz.) pkg. fresh baby spinach leaves
¼ c. unsalted sunflower seeds

Directions

Combine soy sauce, 1 tablespoon olive oil, molasses and red pepper flakes in a bowl. Marinate chicken breasts in soy sauce mixture for 15 minutes to several hours in refrigerator. Combine 1 tablespoon olive oil, onions, celery, mushrooms and garlic in 9 x 11-inch glass baking dish and roast in 350° oven for 15-20 minutes. Add rice, cranberries or raisins and chicken broth to vegetables in glass baking dish. Place marinated chicken breasts on top of the rice. Pour any remaining marinade over the chicken breasts. Cover tightly with foil and bake for 90 minutes at 325° or until rice is tender and chicken breasts are cooked through. Add spinach to the top of casserole and re-cover with foil. Bake additional 15 minutes. Remove foil and sprinkle sunflower seeds on top. Bake, uncovered, an additional 15 minutes. Serves 4-6.

Nutritional Information: 452 calories, 14g fat, 43g protein, 697mg sodium.



Just think - no more phone tag!

With Secure Messaging thru My Health^eVet, you can contact your VA Healthcare team without waiting on hold or playing phone tag. Secure Messaging is as easy to use as email, but completely safe and secure. It's great for non-urgent communication and general healthcare-related questions.

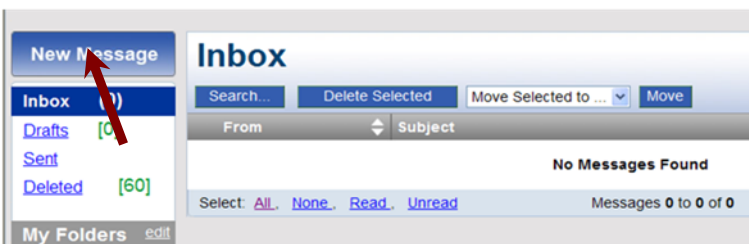
No Waiting on Hold!
No Waiting for a Call Back!
Don't Delay, Opt-in Today!

How to use Secure Messaging:

- 1) Log into your My Health^eVet account at: www.myhealth.va.gov
(Forgot your User ID or Password? Simply click on the 'Forgot User ID' or 'Forgot Password' link directly below the sign in box. Note, you only need to answer one of the two security questions that will appear.)
- 2) Select "Secure Messaging" on the top navigation bar, then click on the orange "Open Secure Messaging" tab in the middle of the screen.
- 3) If it's the first time you're accessing your Secure Messaging inbox, you will need to read the terms and conditions and select 'Opt In'.



- 4) Click 'New Message' and your provider's name will automatically be in the "To" line of the message.



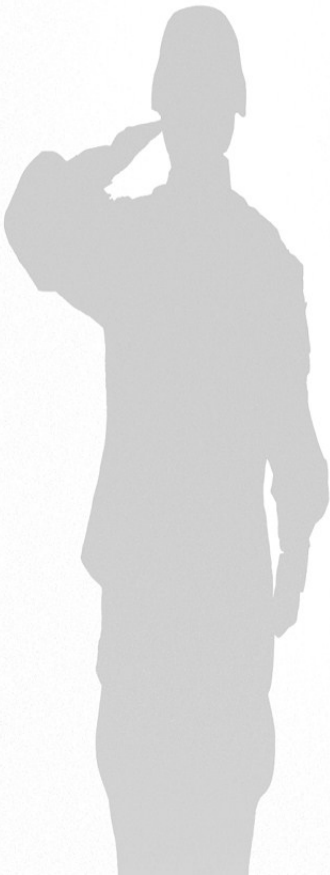
We hope you take advantage of Secure Messaging. If you have any questions about Secure Messaging or My Health^eVet, please contact me via phone or email. I'll be happy to explain this time-saving tool.

You can also stop by my office during your next visit to the St. Cloud VA and I'll help you get on-track with Secure Messaging and many of the other great tools and features of My Health^eVet.



Brian Vetter
My Health^eVet Coordinator
St. Cloud VA Health Care System
Phone: 320-252-1670, dial 9 then ext: 7335





Take care of your buddy!

Help a fellow Veteran enroll
for VA healthcare.

Contact your County Veteran
Service Officer, call the St.
Cloud VA at 320-255-6340,

or apply online at

www.1010ez.med.va.gov

www.facebook.com/StCloudVAHCS



Connect with us on Facebook!